

minutes

Meeting: Joint meeting of the Cross Party Group on Scotch Whisky and Cross Party Group on Tourism
Location: Committee Room 1 Scottish Parliament
Date Held: Wednesday 11 September 2019
Present: **MSPs:** Alexander Burnett MSP, Bill Bowman MSP, Murdo Fraser MSP, Rhoda Grant MSP, Tom Mason MSP, Gordon MacDonald MSP, Liam McArthur MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP, David Stewart MSP

Other attendees: Blair Bowman, Jack Gemmell (Chivas), Karen Freel (Perspectiva Consultants), Kathrin Furst (SWA), Annie Hill (Institute of Brewing and Distilling), Beatrice Morrice (SWA), Debs Newman (Holyrood Distillery), Ian Smith (Diageo), Leon Thomson (VisitScotland), David Williamson (Wm Grant); Victoria Houghton (Hamilton and Inches), Stephen Dickson (City of Edinburgh Council), Oscar Heek, Gary Atkinson (Carmelite Aberdeen), Cllr Ashley Graczyk (CEC), Annie Hill (Napier University), Claire Dolan (SDMA), Kenneth Bramham (STGA), Sarah Cameron (SENSCOT), Willie Macleod (UKH), Marc Crothall (STA), David Winpenny (Heritage railway Assoc), Terry Goddall, (Wyvis B&B), David Scobie (Caledonia Public Affairs), Alasdair Smart (ScotRail), Iain Morrison (SG)

Murdo Fraser MSP and Stuart McMillan MSP chaired the joint meeting of the CPG on Scotch Whisky and CPG on Tourism. They welcomed attendees.

1. Election of office bearers – CPG on Scotch Whisky

Members of the group elected office bearers to the following positions:

Joint Conveners:

- Murdo Fraser MSP
- Gordon MacDonald MSP

Joint Deputy Conveners:

- Liam McArthur MSP
- David Stewart MSP

Secretary

- Beatrice Morrice, Scotch Whisky Association

2. Scotch Whisky Tourism

Beatrice Morrice, SWA, provided an overview on Scotch Whisky tourism stating that over 2 million people visited Scotch Whisky sites in 2018. She explained that many established sites are investing in tourism, in the form of staff and technology and that new sites are often building visitor experiences at the heart of their development.

Debs Newman, Director Visitor Experience at Holyrood Distillery gave an overview on the company, its investment and tourism experiences on offer at the site in

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central Edinburgh. It opened its doors to tourists in August, employs 35 people and offers interactive experiences for visitors.

Ian Smith, Head of Corporate Relations, Diageo provided information on the importance of Scotch Whisky tourism to local communities and the country as a whole. He spoke about the increased interest in experiences rather than buying goods or services, highlighting the importance of interactive experiences. He underlined ongoing collaboration across sites and provided information on the company's investment in central Edinburgh at the Johnnie Walker visitor experience on Princes Street, Edinburgh.

The group discussion covered the opportunities and challenges related to cruise tourism, balancing business production with tourism and maintaining the geographical interest in visiting sites across Scotland.

4. AOB

The dates for the next meetings of the groups will be circulated shortly.

For more information please contact Beatrice Morrice: bmorrice@swa.org.uk or Leon Thomson: Leon.Thompson@visitscotland.com